



Masters of mixed-media

Early winter is a critical time for artists: a sale or lack thereof can make or break Spring Festival. To help out, 798 Art Zone is rolling out new exhibitions of several established and up-and-coming artists.

Beijing Today visits two galleries featuring some of the contemporary art scene's best creatives working in mixed media and collage.

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City steps up fight to stop airpocalypse

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Young director taps crowd to fund film

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Get ready to bundle up in style

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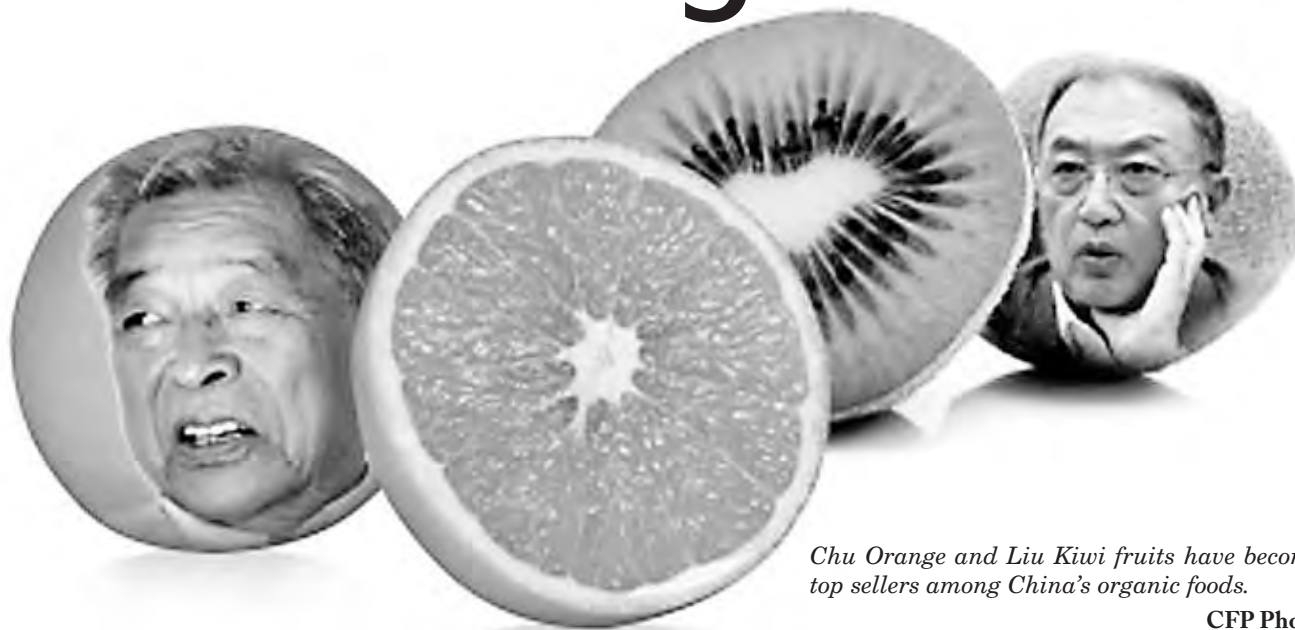


Warm up with this week's hot cocktails

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Entrepreneurs switch from IT to agribusiness



Chu Orange and Liu Kiwi fruits have become top sellers among China's organic foods.

CFP Photo

By Zhao Hongyi

The central committee of the Chinese Communist Party announced its intent to reclaim land from the nation's farmers to stimulate the economy earlier this month.

While market watchers expect a flood of urban residents to begin buying up rural real estate, villages have been leasing illegal access to their land for decades.

Two examples

Chu Shijian used to be the chairman and president of Hongta Tobacco Group, a popular cigarette market in Yunnan Province in the early 1990s.

Although his leadership dragged the brand from bankruptcy to wild success, Chu was accused of fraud and corruption in the year of 1997 and ultimately discredited.

The courts sentenced him to life in prison in 1999 after his conviction, but by 2002 he was free.

Then 74 years old, Chu and his wife took out a pri-

vate lease on 800 hectares of farmland on Mt. Ailao to cultivate oranges.

Ten year later, Chu brought his harvest to Beijing to sell the Chu Orange for 128 yuan for five kilograms, twice the market price. The oranges, which were very sweet and juicy, were a popular item.

Liu Chuanzhi, founder of the Legend Computer Group, had a similar experience.

By the late 1990s, Legend was the world's third largest producer of personal computers and an employer of tens of thousands of people around the world. Liu retired from the group to start a new business.

In 2009, Liu began planting blueberries. Soon after, he joined an agriculture company in Qingdao, Shandong Province to invest as much as 2 billion yuan in kiwis and other fruits.

As the second product in his line, Liu started promoting the Liu Kiwi fruit. This year, he joined with Chu Shijian to sell a joint Chu Orange and Liu Kiwi package for 100 yuan

per kilogram in Beijing.

The fruits sold out quickly, but buyers may have been more interested in the stories than the snacks.

More business

Ding Lei, owner of Netease.com, entered the agriculture business in 2012 by leasing 80 hectares of land in Guangdong to raise pigs.

His business attempted to provide the exact amount of light, temperature and space each pig would require.

At present, Ding and his team are not yet pushing their products – instead, they are focused on ensuring their pork is the best.

Several of Ding's partners reportedly have left the company and Ding is raising the pigs by his own.

Liu Dongqiang, CEO of the online market Jingdong, leased 330 hectares of land in northeast China to grow his own rice. He's selling the leftover rice for 30 yuan per kilogram.

Li Zhiguo, creator of Koubi.com, began raising

chickens on a mountain in Ningbo, Zhejiang Province with his friends in 2011. His birds currently sell for 30 yuan per kilogram.

Further development

Both entrepreneurs and IT elites are moving away from their past successes to focus on agriculture. All seem focused on finding a way to produce the best quality consumer products no matter how many years they have to prepare.

While the public admired their dedication to food safety, industry analysts are admiring their ability to predict the Communist Party's policy changes.

Although the government did allow rural residents to lease their land to collective agribusiness during the last 30 years, the decision to allow private leases is something new.

It's hard to say how the government plans to use the land it reclaims from rural residents, but it may be for the same purposes these entrepreneurs are already targeting.

Ministry bends the laws of math to mask divorce rate

By Zhao Hongyi

Something as well documented as the divorce rate seems hard to contest. But there are lies, damned lies and statistics with Chinese characteristics.

While most media were content to report that Chinese divorce rate for 2012 as 39 percent – respectably less than the 50 percent rate reported in the US – the Beijing municipal government has its own figure.

The Ministry of Social Welfare said 3.1 million couples divorced in Beijing in 2012, or 0.21 percent – an increase of 0.01 percent over the previous year.

In calculating its 39 percent figure, Reuters followed international practices by collecting data on Shanghai residents old enough to marry and younger than 60, and then dividing the number of divorced couples by the number of married couples.

The ministry's calculation is based on the number of divorced couples in Beijing divided by the entire national population.

This number juggling is especially unusual, as the government itself has alluded to the 39 percent rate in the past.

In a show of official solidarity, the Marriage Registration Office of the municipal government has sided with the ministry.

A spokesman for the office said Reuters' methodology was "flawed," even though the same practice is used to calculate the US and UK divorce rates, as well as the divorce rates of almost every other nation.

According to the ministry's calculation, the Beijing divorce rate hovers at an impossibly low 0.21 percent, compared with 0.23 percent nationwide.

Local labor camp becomes ordinary jail under new policy

By Zhao Hongyi

Beijing's Tuanhe Reeducation Camp became known as the Second Prison of Tuanhe Jail on November 16.

The renaming follows a decision by the central committee of the Communist Party of China to dismantle the nation's controversial reeducation through labor program.

It is the only one of Beijing's five labor camps to have changed its name, although the *China Daily* reported official attempts to dismantle the

system would begin no sooner than December. It's expected that the camps will be converted into normal jails.

The reeducation through labor system was created in 1955 to "correct" the thinking of accused counterrevolutionaries. During the following two decades, the system twisted into an abusive tool for waging clandestine political battles.

Following the economic reforms of the early 1980s, the camps found a new class of occupants: street bullies and

people accused of general hooliganism. A decade later, they began to house drug addicts.

But the camps' infamy comes from notorious abuse by local officials. Most reeducation through labor camps are directly administered by petty officials, who use them to indefinitely lock up both political nemeses and unruly citizens who dare to appeal to the central government for justice.

A recent classic case of camp abuse is that of Tang Hui,

a 40-year-old woman from Hunan Province.

Tang's 12-year-old daughter was gang-raped by members of a local mob. Shockingly, the courts not only failed to find the men guilty, but charged the girl with inciting the act.

When Tang appealed to the central government, she was detained by local police and thrown into a reeducation through labor camp. She was detained and placed in the camp several times before

the case was discovered and exposed by national media.

Tang has since been paid off by the local government. She plans to use the money to take her daughter to see a therapist in the US.

Sun Yixi, a professor of law at the Police University of China, called the central committee's decision to end the reeducation through labor system a watershed moment for the nation's justice system and major step toward legal reform.

Officials reveal new plan to fight the airpocalypse



Masks are essential winter wear in the capital.

CFP Photos

Attempts at a fix

The city government has been fighting a pitched battle against pollution since 1998.

In the past 14 years, authorities have managed to curb sulfur dioxide and oxynitride pollution, which are measured in PM 10.

But the battle against PM 2.5 pollutants is far more difficult.

The municipal government recently announced a new five-year (2013 - 2017) plan for clean air. Its ultimate goal is to reduce PM 2.5 concentration to less than 25 percent within five years.

The first thing to go will be coal, which the city hopes to replace with clean energy.

The dangers of coal as a pollutant have been widely known since the Great Smog of 1953 in London, which directly killed 4,000 people and sickened 100,000.

But coal came cheap and plentiful during the years when China needed power. Today it is entrenched.

The city's clean air plan would slash coal's contributions to the power grid to less than 10 percent by 2017. It would also build four natural gas power plants to replace the decommissioned coal furnaces.

Xibei Gas and Electricity Center, one of the city's four largest power producers, recently received an investment of 10 billion yuan to update its newest plant to use

By Annie Wei

Winter is back, and with it the steady upward march of Beijing's pollution levels.

It's the time of year when residents begin asking questions like "Do I want to continue living in Beijing?" and "Is breathing really that important?"

Chronic diseases, allergies and rhinitis flare up in almost everyone, and runny eyes become a conversation topic.

For everything else that has changed, Beijing's environmental issues remain a major source of discontent.



Beijing has banned downtown residents from burning coal.



Police officers wear masks while on duty.

natural gas instead of coal. The plan also caps the number of city vehicles at 6 million by the end of 2017.

This would accompany new policies intended to discourage car use, such as the levying of congestion fees, the creation of low-emission zones and a push to replace or scrap many old government cars.

Vehicle exhaust is thought to be one of the top contributors to air pollution, as it generates higher PM 2.5 levels than industrial emissions.

In recent years, Beijing Bus Group has been replacing its buses with clean energy models. The company operates 1,014 routes and maintains a fleet of 21,424 buses.

However, diesel buses account for 76 percent of its vehicles. Very few buses use natural gas, hybrid energy or electric power.

The plan calls on the government to help finance Beijing Bus Group's upgrade, making 70 percent of the bus fleet run on new energy or clean energy.

Beijing's public transportation system is heavily integrated into downtown life. The city government provides

massive subsidies to keep transportation costs down.

Unlike Shanghai, Guangzhou and Hong Kong, which charge a distance fare, most buses and the entire subway network charge a flat rate irrespective of distance traveled.

But mass immigration into the city has created a real estate boom that sprawls even beyond Fifth Ring Road. It's in this area that the transportation network begins to break down.

"People still want to buy a car because waiting 20 minutes for a bus is hard – especially when the weather drops to -10 C in winter," said Li Min, who rents an apartment outside Fifth Ring Road.

The city government is still looking for other ways to toughen up on emissions. Cooperation with neighboring Hebei Province may be essential.

"Clean air in Beijing depends on cooperation between the authorities of several cities," said Chen Jianming from the Beijing Traffic Management Bureau.

While Beijing can supervise locally-registered vehicles to ensure they meet the emission standards, some 20,000 battered trucks from other provinces and cities bound into the capital each night to deliver fresh produce.

Most of these trucks remains supervised by provinces with comparatively lax emission standards.



Lushly Green Mountain, mixed media on canvas, Zhuang Che

Exhibition sea

By Zhao Hongyi

798 Art Zone is full of surprises. Each winter, the district's studios and galleries enter the Artists scramble to display their best works, hoping to make a sale so they can have so Spring Festival in February.



Orientation No. 12, mixed media on canvas, Zhang Guolong



Dimensionality 11, mixed media on canvas, Zhang Guolong

Masters of mixed media

Artists Zhang Guolong, Yang Shihong and Ying Tianqi are teaming up with other emerging artists to show how mixed media can best present their deep thoughts.

Their creations seem inspired by Picasso, who combined shredded musical scores, newspapers, sand, sawdust and pigments on his canvas.

Picasso's work opened the door to mixed media painting and broadened the public's notion of art. The choice of materials can have a powerful effect on the message of a work, making the medium itself a channel for expression.

Zhang's works make frequent reference to the theme of "Du," a character that appears in the words jiaodu (angle), xiangdu (dimension) and weidu (dimensionality).

Philosopher Li Zehou says "Du" refers to the philosophical notion of a

logical starting point, as in the Confucian Doctrine of the Mean. It is a point of natural, homeostatic balance.

"Elaboration Orientation," the title of this exhibition, refers to the artistic exploration of Zhang Guolong as well as his progression to higher art.

Zhang says artistic creation is a social or cultural behavior. Given Zhang's cultural background, he seeks to simulate the authentic while incorporating ethnic elements. The soil in his paintings, specifically yellow loess, is included to symbolize Chinese identity.

But the works of Zhuang Che, Ying Tianqi, Yang Shihong and Mao Lizi have very different meanings.

Zhuang excels at using mixed media to capture nature, as in his *Lushly Green Mountain*, *Misty Cloud* and *Mountain Peak*, *Auspicious Peak Facing Warmth* and *Proust*.

Ying Tianqi carefully manipulates lighting in his works to reflect a new

angle of the world, as in *See the Light*, *Wonder Wood Wall* and *Encounter Piet Comelain Mountain*.

Yang Shihong's focus on daily weather, as in his exhibited *Variation of Autumn* and *Forces of Nature*.

Shen Kelong is more interested in describing history or elements from history in *Antique: Chair from the Zhengde Period*.

Mao Lizi's work *Scrapers* using scrapers and construction materials to show how human labor is a never-ending process.

But as amazing as these works are, they are not without their shortcomings. The best art should be a reflection of real life and individuals rather than mere vainglorious reveling in the artist's own cutting-edge ego.

Most of the pieces are also priced exceptionally high, showing an unwillingness to part with existing works to make room for new creations.



Object, oil on canvas, Tian Yuan

Asian Art Center

Add: 798 Art Zone, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

Tel: 5978 9709

Open: Till the end of November

Season in 798

ir peak business operation.
me extra money to celebrate



Object, oil on canvas, Tian Yuan



Object, oil on canvas, Tian Yuan

Solo exhibition of Tian Yuan

Tian Yuan is an old artist who suffered during the tumultuous period of the Cultural Revolution and yet clung to contemporary art.

Mountain Art Beijing & Frank Lin Art Center is hosting his latest solo exhibition.

Tian uses his brush to record just about everything he sees. The first section of the exhibition is dedicated to the sketches he accumulated during the last year.

The second part shows a younger and yet more mature Tian – one that uses the latest techniques to create his portraits of contemporary singers, movie stars and celebrities.

Tian uses a collage of Chinese characters to create the faces of stars like Audrey Hepburn, Vivien Leigh, Marilyn Monroe and Teresa Teng. The characters are less important than the composition, and his works only take on meaning when seen from a distance.

"His works bring creative ideas and new meaning to daily life," said Irene Guo, the curator.

The exhibit shows an amazing and inspiring lifelong dedication to art.

If his work has any fault, it is that his insistence in his own experience risks alienating viewers rather than inviting them to share in his creation.



Vivien Leigh 01, modern collage, Tian Yuan



Audrey Hepburn, modern collage, Tian Yuan

Photos by Zhao Hongyi

Mountain Art Beijing & Frank Lin Art Center

Add: 798 Art Zone, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District, Beijing

Tel: 5978 9558

Open: 11 am-6 pm, Tuesday to Sunday, till the end of November

Indie director turns to the crowd to back 6th film

By Annie Wei

Last Friday was the most hopping night yet at the popular bar Alfa in Xingfu Cun.

The party was an unusual combination of casting call and fundraising event for indie director Moxie Peng's newest project: *My 17 Gay Friends*.

Eighty percent of the night's cover charge went to support the production.

Attendees had the choice of being a judge or trying out for a role in the film. Judges were given masks to protect their identities and limited to choosing only two candidates.

More than 300 people showed up and raised 13,000 yuan, bringing Peng a step closer to his goal of 76,000 yuan.

Peng, 26, has already produced five films, the most notable of which are *Gone* (2011), *Tiger Lily* (2012) and *Micro Search* (2012), a documentary featured on the landing page of iQiyi.com and viewed a million times.

My 17 Gay Friends is Peng's sixth film, and his first to take advantage of crowd funding through Dreamore, a Chinese crowd funding site allows anyone in the world to back a project in exchange for rewards set by the creator.

"Every backer's name will be shown at the end of the film," Peng said. "We also opened our casting to the crowd. Keeping our backers involved in this project is an important part of making this film."

As on Kickstarter, the US' most popular crowd funding platform, projects that fail to reach their funding goal within the allocated time will not receive any money.

"The platform can help you get started, but you still have to work hard to achieve your funding goal," Peng said.

"I knew someone who hoped to raise 120,000 yuan to travel the Earth while shooting a film. In the end, he raised 140,000 yuan. It was very exciting," Peng said.

Peng grew up in rural Hunan Province and loved telling stories as a child. He spun yarns to entertain his neighbors when they were playing mahjong.

His latest story is an avant-garde short that digs into Beijing's gay scene.

"Most gay films are gloomy, dark and depressed," Peng said. "I want to show the optimistic, light-hearted side of gay life."

The planned 20-minute film will offer glimpses into the lives of 17 of Peng's friends, showing their personalities, living situations and love lives.

The film takes lighthearted jabs at many of the stereotypes and labels that cut across gay society, such as concepts of femininity and masculinity.

It opens with one gay relationship that is breaking down in its fourth year. After years of compromising, the couple has to come to terms with the fact neither wants to be the "man" in the relationship.

The dispute comes to a head on Halloween night, when they fight over which of them will dress as Snow White and which as Prince Charming. In the end, one dresses up as Snow White and the other as Snow White's evil stepmother.

With their relationship in shambles, the two talk to sister Zhixin, who knows everyone in the gay community and offers comfort and advice.

The film's Dreamore campaign began in October and closes later this month. Shooting is scheduled to begin in January at 10 locations across the city.

"It's hard [for indie films] to play at the cinemas, but I guess more people will get to see it when we put it online," Peng said.

Anyone interested in supporting the project can follow its Weibo account at @my17gayfriend, or by donating to its campaign on Dreamore.



Director Moxie Peng



Poster



Scene of the drama

Practical coats for your winter wardrobe

By Annie Wei

Beijing's cold weather prevents it from being a stylish city: few mature women are up for braving the winds of winter in a thin pair of stockings and high heels just to look nice.

But it's easier to feel good when you look good.

Try to invest in a new winter coat each year: your coat is the first thing people will see on you no matter what else you wear. In winter, it doesn't really matter what else you wear as long as you have a great coat.

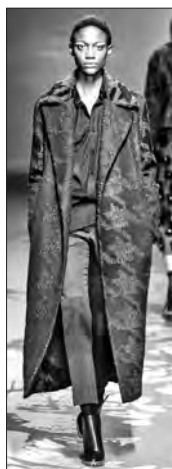
Duffel coats are cuddly and ideal for weekends. If you're an office worker who needs to meet clients or attend business event MaxMara's cashmere coats are amazing. A shearling coat might be a better choice for clubbing.

Wool coats have been changing the past several years, moving away from classic blacks and grays and toward pastel colors that stand out against the pollution.

Uniqlo's new winter duffel coat (399 to 699 yuan) won many customers this year. Many praised it for being warm and light. It can be packed into a tiny bag and is ideal for traveling between Beijing and any southern cities.

For men, a large, roomy, oversized coat can shelter you from the rain and cold on your commute. It's easy to wear a suit jacket inside, and easy to remove when you enter the office.

If you are after warmth and flexibility, nothing can compete with athletic brands like the North Face, Columbia or Maromot Mammoth. These are strong enough to use when biking to work or grocery shopping and will keep out the cold when you're waiting for a bus or cab.



Durable and warm athletic winter wear.

Women's wool and fur coats.



Wool coats



CFP Photos

Dining Out

Taiwanese food festival at Hilton Wangfujing

By Annie Wei

People are choosing to vacation in Taiwan for the island's beaches and great hiking trails as much as for its food.

The island is known for dishes that combine Chinese mainland and aboriginal sensibilities, and for restaurants that focus on the details.

Famous favorites include rustic fare topped with long-stewed pork shrimp paste, dried fish, dumplings from the north, noodles from the south and authentic Hakka food.

Last weekend, the Hilton Beijing Wangfujing began hosting a two-week Taiwanese food festival.

The guest chefs hail from the Fullon Hotel, one of the largest hotel chains in Taiwan with a reputation for high-quality, traditional dishes.

Beijing Today chatted with the chefs and asked about the secrets of Taiwanese cuisine.

Q: What's the essence of Taiwanese cuisine?

A: Taiwan was a farming society in its early years. People had a simple life and were good at using their abundant produce to prepare delicious food. Taiwan cuisine prefers simple techniques that require fresh ingredients and delicate preparation.

Q: It's not easy to find authentic Taiwanese food in Beijing, and many people blame it on the lack of ingredients. What special Taiwanese foods are you preparing at this food festival?

A: We brought in yashang (duck meat) from Yilan and rice noodles



from Xinzu. Yashang is made of dry duck meat that is smoked over sugarcane. It tastes slightly sweet. We cut the yashang into slices and top it with garlic spouts, sliced ginger and pepper and a bit of vinegar. It tastes delicious.

Q: What's your recommendation for the festival?

A: There are plenty of good choices diners should not miss, such as oyster pancakes, beef noodles and three-cup chicken.

Q: Can you recommend some Taiwanese dishes that the average Beijing family can prepare at home?

A: Ginger duck and beef noodles are ideal for cooking at home. They can be stored in refrigerator and prepared anytime. With beef noodles, the key is the stock. There are three kinds of soup stock used. The original is made from beef shank, tendon and lots of herbs, the white soup is of beef bones that are boiled for eight hours and the red soup made of stewed beef. You mix the three soups in right proportion.

Vasco's

Where: Floor 5, Hilton Beijing Wangfujing, Dongcheng District

Open: 11:30 am - 3 pm; 5-10 pm

Tel: 5812 8888



Wines of the Week

Hot drinks for cold nights

By Annie Wei

The weather is getting colder, and the romantic autumn nights of sipping wine on a terrace are almost gone.

Most people are searching for ways to stay warm indoors.

This week, *Beijing Today* tried the signature cocktails by mixologist Attila Balint at Atmosphere, the highest bar in town.

Balint is from Hungary but has more than a decade of experience serving quality drinks across Europe.

His cocktail, The Wind of Patagonia, is a refreshing concoction made of the Peruvian brandy Pisco and homemade smoky lavender syrup infused with lapsang souchong tea. It has a touch of fresh lime and grapefruit, topped off with grapefruit zest and lavender flowers.

It's an amazing drink to try if you're in the Guomao area.

Atmosphere

Where: Floor 80, World Summit Wing, 1 Jianguomen Dajie, Chaoyang District

Open: 24 hours

Tel: 6505 2299 ext. 6433

We also talked to Jason Jia, the supervisor of Atmosphere, who introduced two easy drinks you can make at home.

Hot Loli

Jia said the key to this drink is blending winter-friendly spirits, like rum, with warming ingredients like ginger and nutmeg. It's based on a Caribbean liqueur used to boost one's immunity.

The drink also has cloves and orange peels, which add a festive feeling.

How to prepare:

- 10 milliliters Havana Club rum
 - 10 milliliters TBT Golden Falernum
 - 15 milliliters fresh orange juice
- Fill up the glass with hot water and garnish with a cinnamon stick, orange zest and cloves

Hot Dram

Jia said this drink is like a spiritual trip around Scotland. Many patrons like the way its light herbs add a sweet, mellow and long aftertaste.

How to prepare:

- 40 milliliters Drambuie
- 10 milliliters fresh lemon juice
- 20 milliliters fresh orange juice

Fill up the glass with hot water and garnish with a large orange zest and a cinnamon stick.



Photos provided by Vasco's